

Sort into sets

Level: All

Age: 4-12

Organization: pairs

Aims: To sort and classify vocabulary into sets; to aid memory and reinforce connections between words.

Language focus: *In the example:* rooms and furniture, present simple

Alternatives: any familiar vocabulary

Materials: *Essential:* sets of small picture or word cards (one for each pair)

Procedure

1. Divide the class into pairs.
2. Give out a set of cards to each pair, e.g. a set of cards for rooms and furniture might include: bed, shower, cooker, TV, sofa, fridge, toilet, chest of drawers, wardrobe, armchair, dishwasher, bath. Alternatively children can cut out and make the cards before the activity.
3. Ask the children to sort the cards according to the rooms at home where you usually find them (bedroom, kitchen, bathroom, living room).
4. At the end, children compare their answers and report back, either by naming the items in each room or saying, e.g. the bed goes in the bedroom.
5. If you like, you can then ask them to think of one more item that goes in each room, e.g. *a lamp in the bedroom, a table in the kitchen, a rug in the living room, a basin in the bathroom.*

Comments and Suggestions

- Very young children can sort pictures into sets of different colors, e.g. red, blue, yellow and green things, or sets of animals, e.g. wild animals and farm animals. The physical manipulation of the cards helps to develop visual observation and classifying skills in a concrete, hands-on way.
- With older children, you can make the task more challenging and creative by asking them to categorize cards in any way they like. For example, for rooms and furniture, children might choose to classify the items according to whether or not they use electricity, or whether or not they are essential in a home.
- With older children, this activity can also be used for familiarizing children with grammatical categories, e.g. noun, adjectives, verbs, using language taken from a familiar text.

